

Using dietary supplements wisely

The US National Institute of Health Centre for Complementary and Alternative Medicine has recently published a fact sheet for consumers which offers a general overview of dietary supplements, discusses safety considerations, and suggests sources for additional information.

Key advice includes the following:

- Federal regulations for dietary supplements are very different from those for prescription and over-the-counter drugs. For example, a dietary supplement manufacturer does not have to prove a product's safety and effectiveness before it is marketed.
- If you are thinking about using a dietary supplement, first get information on it from reliable sources. Keep in mind that dietary supplements may interact with medications or other dietary supplements and may contain ingredients not listed on the label.
- Tell your health care providers about any complementary and alternative practices you use, including dietary supplements. Give them a full picture of what you do to manage your health. This will help ensure coordinated and safe care.

For further details, see: <http://nccam.nih.gov/health/supplements/wiseuse.htm>

Source: UNPA